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Round VII -28

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Let us discuss this word in detail.

Muslims call themselves ***Ummah***. This word is of the same root of Ummi. Ummi is how Muhammad referred to himself and it means unlettered, unschooled, uneducated.

Therefore Ummah means the community of the unlettered followers. In the case of Muhammad this implied that his knowledge was of a divine source. However that distinction does not apply to the Ummah. Hence Ummah, by definition means *the ignorant mass of believers*.

The verse 3:20 reads:

وَقُل لِّلَّذِينَ أُوْتُواْ الْكِتَابَ وَالأُمِّيِّينَ أَأَسْلَمْتُمْ

And say to the People of the Book and to those who are unlearned: ***(Ummiyeen)*** "Do ye (also) submit yourselves?"

Here the word Ummiyeen الأُمِّيِّينَ which is the plural of Ummi is translates as:

Yusuf Ali: those who are unlearned:
Pickthal: those who read not
Shakir: the unlearned people

Let us take another verse (Imran 3:75):

قَالُواْ لَيْسَ عَلَيْنَا فِي الأُمِّيِّينَ سَبِيلٌ

"They say, "there is no call on us (to keep faith) with these ignorant (Pagans).*(Ummiyeen)*"

Yusuf Ali translates this word in this verse as ignorant.
Pickthal translates it as Gentiles.
And Shakir translates the word as unlearned people.

The noun "gentile" is generally applied to an individual who is ignorant of the Scriptures. In English the synonym for "gentile" is "pagan".

Historically, the term *gentile* was used by the governing Romans for the non-Romans (foreigners); it was adopted by the Jews to denote the non-Jews; in turn the Christians used

it for the Pagans. In the Qur'an the term *al-Ummiyeen*, is generally translated as "the Unlettered folks". The verse 62:2 reads,

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ

Yusuf Ali translates this thus:
"*It is He Who has sent amongst the Unlettered an apostle from among themselves,"*

And in his commentary he writes: *"The Unlettered:* as applied to a people, it refers to the Arabs, in comparison with the People of the Book..."

Verse: 2:78

وَمِنْهُمْ أُمِّيُّونَ لاَ يَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ

And there are among them *illiterates*, who know not the Book,

The root of *Ummi* is *"Um"* (mother). A literal translation of that into English would be "*Natural*", although the two words have taken different meanings in time. Etymologically, Ummi is the natural state of being ignorant and unlearned, as when born by mother.

So Ummah is the uneducated and unlettered mass of people who are ignorant of the scriptures and hence unable to find their way. The Ummah is in constant need of guidance. *Imam*, also from the same root, is one who leads the Ummah. This is basically the concept of sheep and shepherd. The entire community of Muslims is deemed to be sheep in need of shepherd.

asked

7- WE TALKED ABOUT SURA 33 AND I SAID THIS SURA IS NOT SELF EXPLANATORY. I ASKED YOU TO TELL US WHO ARE THE "CONFEDERATES" MENTIONED IN VERSE 20 AND FROM WHERE THEY DID NOT WITHDRAW. EXPLAIN THAT WITHOUT ANY REFERENCE TO HADITH OR TAFSEER.

And you wrote

Why should I care what was the name of that group. I find no relevancy for the lesson I get from the verse. Let's say the tribe's name is "Ibn Fulan" or "Abu Falan" what would it change? First, the Quran is not a history book. Yes, it refers to historical events, but does not narrate them like a chronology, or like Hadith books or the Old Testament does by giving pages and pages of names, number of mules and horses… The Quran uses history or events to drive and convey lessons for those who have intelligence and good faith. But people like you (this include your twins, Sunnies and Shiites) miss the main point of the story in search for irrelevant details, for goose eggs.

Of course you are not required to care or explain anything. The whole purpose of this exercise is to show that when you deny the historic background of the Quran, it become illegible and incomprehensible. You say the Quran is not supposed to be a book of history, but it refers to historical events. But when I ask what those events are, you shrug. Now what is the lesson of Sura 33? All we see are references to some enemies withdrawing and Muhammad slaying some people and enslaving some. What is it all about? What is the spiritual lesson in this Sura?